



**For Immediate Release**  
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**News  
Release**

**Contact:**  
Rebecca L. Ward  
Immunization Program  
(o) 801-538-6682 (m) 801-647-5421

## **Flu Vaccination is Key Message from U.S. Asst. Surgeon General**

(Sandy, UT) – Prominent U.S. physician with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Anne Schuchat, MD, says getting vaccinated will be the best way to stop the spread of seasonal and pandemic flu. Schuchat was the keynote speaker at today's Utah Influenza Summit, an annual event that brings together public and private healthcare professionals to address issues surrounding influenza vaccine and pandemic planning. As Assistant Surgeon General and Director for the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Schuchat played a key role in CDC's response to the 2009 novel-H1N1 influenza virus.

"Because influenza is a highly infectious and unpredictable virus, vaccination is one of the most important steps in protecting against influenza infection," said Dr. Schuchat. "It is critical that public and private health care professionals develop effective vaccination and disease management strategies to reduce the spread of disease and ensure timely responses to an influenza pandemic," Schuchat added. "The 2009 novel- H1N1 influenza pandemic provided a unique opportunity to assess how well our current plans work and make the necessary improvements to better protect the health of our communities."

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) and Utah Adult Immunization Coalition (UAIC) hosted the Summit, which included sessions on the development of effective public health messages, surveillance planning, health care worker vaccination, school-based vaccination strategies and a panel discussion with health care professionals about innovative vaccination strategies. Dr. Schuchat gave a national overview of the novel H1N1 influenza pandemic and its applications to future pandemic planning. She also provided an update on the 2010 influenza vaccine and the new universal vaccination recommendations.

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Influenza vaccination is routinely recommended for certain high-risk groups, such as young children, elderly persons, pregnant women and anyone with known health risks. This year's vaccine will protect against three strains of the influenza virus: the H1N1-like virus (A/California/7/2009) and two other strains (A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2)-like virus and a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus and is recommended for everyone, regardless of age or risk.

The UDOH encourages everyone to get the influenza vaccine. Several formulations are available, including the nasal spray, shot and thimerosal-free. Utahns should talk to their health care provider to determine which type is best for them. To locate an influenza vaccination clinic, visit the Utah Flu Vaccine Locator at [www.immunize-utah.org](http://www.immunize-utah.org).

For more information about influenza vaccination, contact the Utah Immunization Hotline at 1-800-275-0659, your health care provider or local public health department.

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